THE NEW YORK TIMES, TUESDAY, JULY 26, 1983

## Vorking Profile: Rep. Ed Zschau of California

# A Skeptical View From the World of High Tech

By DAVID SHRIBMAN

'ASHINGTON, July 25 — It is, at t glance, the typical freshman slator's office. The blotters on the ks are new, the walls blank, the kshelves nearly empty. But there, a shelf in Representative. Ed hau's office, a framed picture is sped against the wall. It is a port of Albert Einstein.

o the 173 lawyers, 107 business-1, and 17 ranchers and farmers in House the voters of the 12th Dist of California have added their brand of Representative. Mr. nau, the Republican Congressman a the Silicon Valley, is a computer

when you cross a politician and a puter scientist, this is what you said Representative Gerry rski of Minnesota, the Democrats' hman whip. "He's not just a company the scientist He's not pust a company that the scientist He's not pust the scientist H r scientist. He's very much a poli-

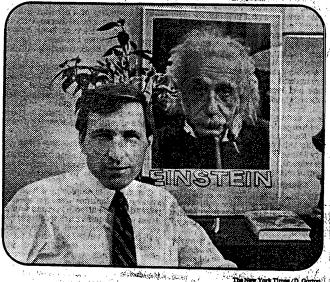
Zschau (his name is proiced like the first syllable of wer") has attracted unusual ation for a freshman member of the se, a body that ordinarily uses the egislatures, the county courtes and the local bar associations s farm teams. But now, when high nology is the buzzword of the sea-Mr. Zschau, the first member of House to come from the world of technology, has emerged as ething of a celebrity.

#### Playing a Skeptic's Role

r. Zschau, who is 43 years old, is a of a surprise as well. He is, of se, almost evangelistic on the set of high technology, the world its and bytes and RAMs and is. But, if anything, Mr. Zschau sought to be a skeptic on Capitol trying to cool the ardor of some of olleagues who think that all the the American economy can be the American economy can be ved through a high-tech gazpaof robotics and random access outer memories.

laintaining our technological rship is important, but the ex-tions for it in the economy are a unrealistic," he said. "It's still a small part of our overall society. eople who say we're going to be a tech society and that we should t about smokestack industry are Pollyannas. Powerful computgenetic engineering, robotics — all have glamour. But they're a very small part of our econ-

he other end of the Capitol, Senarank R. Lautenberg, one of the ers of Automatic Data Process-



Representative Ed Zschau, in his office with portrait of Einstein.

### 'I don't think of this as my last career. Getting re-elected doesn't obsess me.'

ing Inc., offers a different perspective ing inc., others a different perspective on high technology, that of a business-man whose data processing opera-tions were transformed by the devel-opment of the computer.

"We come at high technology from different ends," the New Jersey Republican said of himself and Mr. Zschau, "but we can make an enormous difference here. It's one thing to have read about high technology, but it's another thing to have lived through it."

Mr. Zschau grew up just outside omaha, attending a school so small that three grades were taught in one room. Before he was a teen-ager he amounced to the world, or at least to his neighborhood, that he intended to be a physicist. Then he set about exbe a physicist. Then he set about ca-amining the mysteries of electronics, flashing lights and buzzers at first and then the more sophisticated workings of electric motors

in philosophy but taking heavy doses of mathematics and physics, eventually finding himself attending, and then teaching at, the Stanford Business School. It was a lovely life for a young married man, a West Coast idyll of research, touch feotball and strolling the campus with his young children.

But before long he grew restless. "I'wondered whether I really knew anything about business," he said, "I was teaching people how to be a chief executive officer and I was wondering if I knew how to be a chief executive offi-cer myself."

He founded his own company, Sys-tem industries, and in Milpitas, Calif., once or chard and dairy country, he set out manufacturing high-performance memory systems for computers. Twice the company almost went bank-rupt, but in 1982, the year he ran for Congress, System Industries was pub-He went off to Princeton, majoring licly traded, had 550 employees and

\$75 million in sales.

"He's one of the very few p
who would be willing to leave a
lion-dollar company and a very h
life in California to serve the
try," said former Represent
Paul N. McCloskey, the Californi
multilen whose seat Mr. Zechau publican whose seat Mr. Zschau occupies. "He's in a situation no a freshman, that I know is torning. The only thing that is distret is that he might get frustrated

Today Mr. Zschau's battles fought in committee rooms rathan in board rooms and factoringes. He was a co-sponsor of nuclear freeze resolution and House Foreign Affairs Committe cepted his amendment pur greater emphasis on arms reduc He added five amendments to the port Administration Act, which posed export controls on certain t ucts for national security reasons

#### Eschews the Party Circuit

"He's the star of our fresh class," said Representative Leach of Iowa, who played rugby him at Princeton. "By backgreand potential he is far and away most promising member of our cl How many people around here had two successful careers?"

Thus far Mr. Zschau has develo an umusual political style. He retu to his California district almost et weekend and has held nearly 70 th meetings this year. He does not rid meetings this year, he does not no parades or attend spaghetti dinn He eschews both ends of the Car Hill-Georgetown party axis, refus to pause over petits fours to disc the virtues of tax-exempt mortg

ine. Virtues of tax-exempt mortg revenue bonds with lobbyists.

"I have a rule: I don't go out night in Washington," he said. "I ple say you have to do it. I say odn't: You either in the office or hot But I don't go to parties. I don't complish anything at them. If so one wants to talk to me, they can co in during the day. You get a lot do in during the day. You get a lot do in during the day. You get a lot do faster

Mr. Zschau's staff expects him run for re-election but he is not lik to become a fixture in Congress. T

also is not his style.

"I don't think of this as my last reer," he said. "I don't know how lo I'll be here, but I do know there will a time for me to let someone else v is enthusiastic and naïve make a c tribution. Getting re-elected does obsess me. I feel very free to make decisions and, well, that's that. I do feel a need to be here."